



# 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team



PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM

## MailCall No. 2282

August 2, 2015

*517th Parachute Infantry Regiment  
460th Parachute Field Artillery Battalion  
596th Parachute Combat Engineer Company*

517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team (PRCT)

517th Parachute Infantry Regiment  
460th Parachute Field Artillery, 596th Parachute Combat Engineer Company

## Thunderbolt

Newsletter Date: August 2015



### Serving the Men of the 517th PRCT since March 1943

This special issue has a ballot you need to vote on to consider dissolving the 517th PRCT Association or to maintain and continue the Association. Your vote is critical. Please complete your ballot and mail it back as soon as possible (ASAP)!

#### Packed in this Chute

From the Clerk 1

Ballot to Vote 2

A special issue of the Thunderbolt is being issued and sent to all known troopers for whom we have addresses, plus everyone on this MailCall mailing list.

This special issue has a ballot that you (517<sup>th</sup> Troopers and veteran members of the 517<sup>th</sup> Association) need to vote on to consider dissolving the 517PRCT Association or to maintain and continue the Association. Your vote is critical. Please complete your ballot and mail it back as soon as possible.

I will send an electronic copy of this special Thunderbolt as a separate email attachment to follow this MailCall.



**Eddy Lamberty** recently posted some photos of 517<sup>th</sup> and other unit's monuments in Belgium. Here are a few.

Saint-Jacques (left)





# 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team



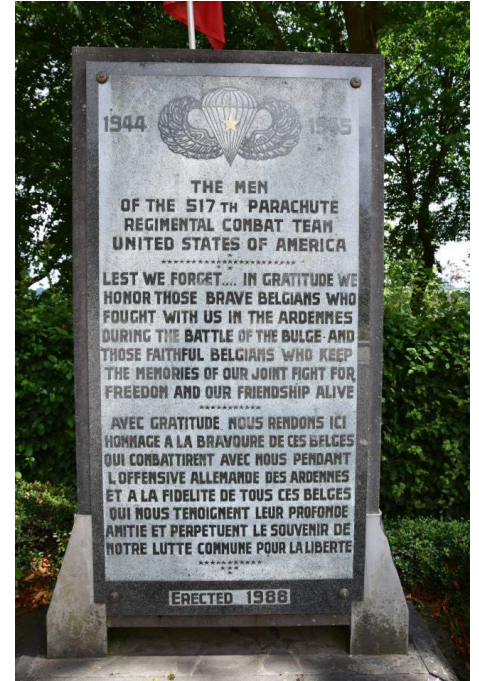
Manhay (left)

Wanne, Trois Ponts (right)

Stavelot (below left)

Logbierme (below right)

Quatre-Bras crossroads in Soy (bottom)







## *517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team*

Hello, I am trying my best to find information on **Albert Schornberg** from Louisville Ky. He was a member of the 596th and is from my home town. I would like to know more about him if there is any info available.

Thank you

Curry Jenkins

Public Safety Office  
Terre Haute International Airport

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**Albert G. Schornberg** was with the 596<sup>th</sup> and used to attend their reunions in the 80's. There are a couple of pictures of him in the [Don Saunders photos](#) and on [Steve Markle's website](#)

Al died in 1998.



Al is also briefly mentioned in the Paratroopers' Odyssey: <http://www.517prct.org/recollections2.htm>

**James M. Moser** (596th) recalls being sent with **Vincent Podrasky, Peter Zubricky, George Mitchell, James Botts, Eugene Markle, Lloyd Spencer, and Albert Schornberg** to aid a tank company. The tank company commander ordered the group to remove Teller mines which prevented his advancing. The 596th men picked up the mines and piled them off the road, only to be told to deactivate them. They started lifting the firing tops off as the tank commander observed and asked, "What happens if one of those is booby trapped?" Moses replied, "You and me will have two rich widows." The 596th Engineers were allowed to finish unassisted.



## 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team

**Subject:** Re: 517th MailCall - July 26, 2015

Bob, thank you very much, this helps a lot. maybe you can help me with two other quick questions I haven't been able to find answers to;

1. do you have a picture of the 596th distinctive insignia?
2. do you have a color picture of the 596th jump oval? from the black and white ones ive seen on the website, it looks to be just solid red but I cant tell.

Thanks  
Curry Jenkins

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Hi Curry,

Interesting questions. A lot of people have asked about the 517 insignia, but less so about the 596<sup>th</sup>, so I don't have a lot of information.

I do have logo's including a high-quality rendering of the 596<sup>th</sup> logo at [http://www.517prct.org/images/high\\_quality\\_logos/596\\_logo.ai](http://www.517prct.org/images/high_quality_logos/596_logo.ai)

If you are looking for pictures of the 596<sup>th</sup> patch as it is worn on a uniform, I'll look around, but I don't see a clear picture of the patch being worn by soldiers. Since these were unofficial insignia, never approved by the army, I don't know if they were ever worn during the war. Some 517<sup>th</sup> patches were made in southern France by hand, but I don't know about any 596<sup>th</sup>.

We know that the insignia were all designed by Dick Spencer. The story of the 517<sup>th</sup> patch is at:

[http://www.517prct.org/documents/patch\\_history/patch\\_history.htm](http://www.517prct.org/documents/patch_history/patch_history.htm)

Of course, you can get good reproduction of all the patches, including the 596<sup>th</sup> on eBay. Just go to ebay.com and search for "596<sup>th</sup>", and there are several sellers.



Airborne Artillery Background Trimming  
with Parachutist Badge

And I do not know about the 596<sup>th</sup> jump oval. The 517<sup>th</sup> oval was blue with a silver border (<http://www.517prct.org/logos.htm>), but I've never see a 596<sup>th</sup> oval. Since the 596<sup>th</sup> was part of the 517PRCT, maybe they could wear the same oval. Or maybe the oval were only intended for the 517 PIR and not the PRCT. Again, I think the rules were not official. Where on the website did you see the black and white photos?

According to one site, "Artillerymen and Engineers wanted to wear the red color of their respective branches." See: <http://www.wv2paratroopers.com/id18.html>  
That is also suggested at: <http://www.angelfire.com/md2/patches/other/airborne2.html>

I will include you questions in my next MailCall newsletter. There are a few 596<sup>th</sup> engineers who might be able to shed some light.

Bob Barrett



## 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team



James W. Benson  
596<sup>th</sup> PCEC  
Nice, France 1944

Here are a few of the pictures of 596th guys that show the ovals.

[http://www.517prct.org/photos/don\\_saunders/Don%20Saunders%20Sept%2028,%201944%20in%20Southern%20France.jpg](http://www.517prct.org/photos/don_saunders/Don%20Saunders%20Sept%2028,%201944%20in%20Southern%20France.jpg)

[http://www.517prct.org/photos/don\\_saunders/Don%20Saunders%20and%20Laravey.jpg](http://www.517prct.org/photos/don_saunders/Don%20Saunders%20and%20Laravey.jpg)

[http://www.517prct.org/photos/596th\\_photos\\_markle/%5EWilliam%20Bill%20Hudson.jpg](http://www.517prct.org/photos/596th_photos_markle/%5EWilliam%20Bill%20Hudson.jpg)

[http://www.517prct.org/photos/james\\_benson/james\\_benson2.jpg](http://www.517prct.org/photos/james_benson/james_benson2.jpg)

With the exception of **James Benson**, they are all very difficult to see, and even his isn't the clearest.

Curry Jenkins

Can anyone tell us what colors were used for the 596<sup>th</sup> ovals? And was the 596<sup>th</sup> patch ever actually worn by the troopers? Do we even know when it was created, or if it was ever used on uniforms? -- BB

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Hey Bob, Anne here in Arizona. I was talking to **Earl Boone** over at the VA home here in Arizona and he mentioned that when he was with the 517th after parachuting into France, they had a member of the French Resistance with them. I questioned him on this as my book is partly about the French Resistance. He wasn't able to tell me much, but he did say they called him 'Frenchie' and he was only 16 years of age.

Think anyone might be able to give me some details, real name, or whatever.

Thanks and I continue to enjoy the newsletter. Anne

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Hi Anne. Yes I do remember reading that some of the planes had French resistance fighters on them who dropped with the troopers. But I don't know where I read this, so I don't have the details. I'll keep looking, and I will ask in the next MailCall.

Bob Barrett

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I know they came in with the intelligence men who I've written about. They were there before the invasion, getting things lined up. But when Earl told me that they had them with them to translate, and even young men of 16 yrs of age, that I did not know.

Blessings, Anne



## *517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team*

At the New Orleans reunion, Claire managed to grab a couple of the vets to interview them and get a short bio for our [Meet the Troopers](#) page on the website. Here is the second one for [Gabriel Delesio](#).

### **Gabriel Delesio**



#### **Battery C, 460th Parachute Field Artillery Battalion**

I lived in Philadelphia when I was drafted in February of 43. I reported to Arkansas, and then Camp Fanning in Texas. After I finished my basic, I saw the notice on the board and signed up for the paratroops. I was the only one who volunteered for the paratroops, and probably thousands of guys went through there.

Next stop: Fort Benning. I got my wings on February 16, 1944. by April, I was on my way overseas to Algeria with 500 other replacements. It was a replacement center. From there, we went to Sicily, and then to Italy and finally caught up with combat team three days before the jump. So I didn't know anybody I jumped with. I was assigned to and jumped with C Battery 460, and I couldn't find the rest of my unit until the next day. We were outside of Les Arcs.

Lt Moore and Private Kennamer were both killed on Day 1. They went out to scout and walked right into the ambush. Older than all of us, he was 36. We called him the old man. Private Kennamer had been in jail for nine years. He was able to sign up for the paratroops, which was the reason they let him out. They were only on the ground for five hours when that happened.

Gabriel joined the 460th five days before the jump into southern France. He had never seen a 75 pack howitzer, and everything was already loaded on a C-47 before he arrived. After landing, he helped assemble and saw his first howitzer. He wasn't with the section that he was assigned to because he landed too far away. That howitzer was captured by the Germans the first day, but later recovered the next day, only needing two tires. -- paraphrased from *517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team*, Turner Publishing, 1998





## 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team



Artillerymen of the 60th packing howitzers in Italy

On the Bulge: it was the worst winter in 25 years. We didn't get new clothes or a shower in a month and half. It was so cold you couldn't smell anything. Gabe then recalled the tractor trailer-like showers: they cut two holes out, and you walked in one door, took a shower, and headed out with clean clothes, because the other trailer was heating hot water. The only thing was that we got someone else's clothes, but we were all about the same size and weight.

When asked if he'd ever gotten to Nice, he replied thoughtfully smiling, "Yes - it was very good."

We came into New York and the fireboats were out there greeting us. It took about 19 days to cross to Europe and then 8 to get home. Even discharge took a couple of days.

I was promoted to corporal coming home on the boat. I took a guy's place who went to Berlin.

See: [Short History of the 460th Parachute Field Artillery Battalion](#)

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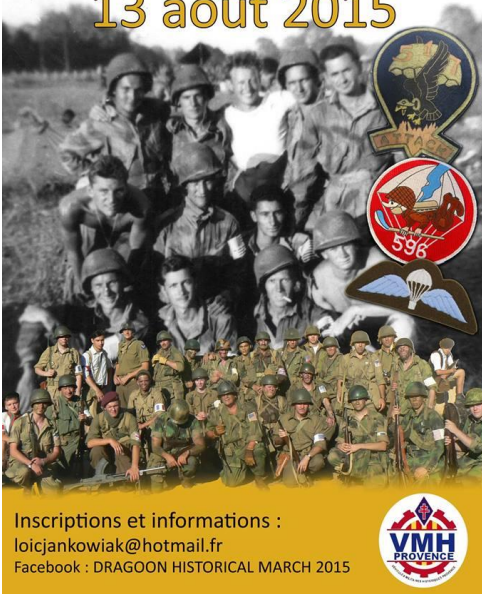
*Received from Gabriel Delesio, via interview by Claire Giblin  
June 2015, New Orleans, LA*



## 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team

### Dragoon Historical March

13 août 2015



“[Left] is a poster for this year’s reenactment of a Dragoon Historical March in August. On the poster, isn’t the black and white photo of the 596th in France? I think I recognize one of those guys on the back left. Can anyone verify this? – BB”

Yes I recognized **Charlie Pugh**.... this is the 1st squad of the 3rd platoon for the 596. It includes some guys who are still around. **Coffelt** and **Mathis** died in the war.

### Steve Markle



#### From:

[http://www.markleweb.com/gallery/v/wwii/people/1stSquad3rdPlatoon596\\_AP\\_0002.jpg.html](http://www.markleweb.com/gallery/v/wwii/people/1stSquad3rdPlatoon596_AP_0002.jpg.html)

1st Squad - 3rd Platoon – 596<sup>th</sup> Parachute Combat Engineer Company

Standing L-R - **KA Johnson**, Leonard Mathis, Charlie Pugh, Marshall Turner, Claude Mills.

Middle Row - James McFadden, ? , **Manny Ventoza**, Ernie Coffelt.

Front Row - James Small, John Holbrook, Baker.

Photo from the **Charlie Pugh** photo collection.





# 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team

We've forgotten **Joe Bail!** He was in the 460th and with us in France last year, along with his family.

Joe hasn't attended reunions or may not even receive Mail Call or the Thunderbolt, but he is a surviving trooper and has been active in maintaining friendships in France.

I've been watching the ever-growing list of known troopers and thinking about what a great exercise this is for all of us. It was something Gene Frice - F Co. - always wanted to do. So let's keep figuring it out.

This week, we await the arrival of Patou and Roland Orengo, our good friends from Sospel. They are instrumental in keeping the memory of the 517 alive in that area and have a wonderful memorial on their property. Arriving for Vanessa's wedding, they plan to travel to see Nolan Powell as well. Wahoo!

Airborne!  
**Claire Giblin**

Including some additions that were noted at the reunion, we're up to 64 known 517/460/596<sup>th</sup> troopers still in communications with us. But we know there are lots more out there. Who else have you been in touch with lately?

Amerlan	Robert J.	Henzl	Ed	McSpadden	Philip P.
Armbruster	Stephen M.	Hess	Ray R.	McWilliams	Jim
Bail	Joseph	Hiers	Ludwick (Lucky)	Meline	George E.
Baird	Marshall W.	Hobson	Keith	Miller	Dick
Berdit	Willard	Holzworth	Louis B.	Molina	Joe
Boone	Earl	Hudson	William S.	Morris	James Frank
Bradovich	John	Johnson	Kaare Allan	Pastalenic	John M.
Brannan	William	Jonientz	John G.	Perkins	Leslie E.
Brown	Fred E.	Kachalsky	Richard	Powell	Nolan L.
Cason	Jack J.	Kenamer	Woodie E.	Ross	Norman & Betty
Castello	Jay	Kennedy	George W.	Schlacter	Mike H.
Clark	Joseph L.	Kennedy	Robert W.	Snyder	Gene J. (Zoot)
Cross (USA Ret.)	Thomas R.	Kochersperger	Chester (Chet)	Stonis	John
Dahlberg	Melvin J.	Lawrence	Harold G. (Sug)	Strojan	John J.
Dalrymple	Robert (Bob) W.	Lecklider	R.G. (Bob) "Doc"	Traver	Myrle E.
Dean	Leo P.	Long	Dallas L.	Trenary	Melvin C.
Delesio	Gabriel	Mandio	Anthony A.	Vaught	Robert L.
Ehly	Erle E.	Marsinko	John T.	Ventoza	Manuel
Garvey	John L.	Martel	Joseph	Whisenhunt	Earl
Goodsell	Roger W.	McAvoy	Tom	Yung	Wah Fook
Gordy	Carl W. Jr	McDonald	Hunter		
Hart	Robert D.	McMorrow	Merle		



## 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team

From: <https://www.facebook.com/FirstAirborneTaskForceTheForgottenFront>



### Two twin brothers in the 460th PFAB

Two members of the 460th Parachute Field Artillery Battalion, **Roger and Richard Tallakson**, were identical twins. They had asked to jump from separate airplanes so Mom and Pop wouldn't get a double jolt in a single telegram from the War Department in Washington, D.C. When the green lights flashed in their respective C-47 cabins, they leaped into the dark unknown. Roger landed some twenty-five miles from his designated drop zone, and Richard crashed to earth thirty miles from his target field. After daylight, each twin began asking other troopers for information on his missing brother. Richard heard

that Roger had been killed, Roger was told that Richard had died. Two days later, the twins were joyously reunited in an assembly area. Neither had been injured.

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I did see a similar, slightly different version in *Paratroopers' Odyssey* "recollections":

**Richard and Roger Tallakson** (460) were a set of twins to serve with the Combat Team. While they performed many duties together, they preferred not to fly in the same plane. On August 15, 1944, Roger landed about 26 miles from the intended DZ and Richard was about 30 miles away. Daylight brought lots of activity and each questioned nearby troopers on the whereabouts of the missing brother. Richard had been informed that Roger suffered from a broken back and had been flown back to Rome. Roger heard rumors that Richard had been evacuated to Rome with a broken leg. Two days following the jump, Roger was staggering into the assembly area when he spotted Richard sitting beside a freshly dug fox hole, reading a letter from home.

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Dear Friends,

Our 6th Army Group in France historical seminar and commemoration 17-19 September is approaching quickly. We had a meeting with the folks from the hotel today to lock in details.

We have a new point of contact for our room reservations - Jennifer Chang. We have updated our flyer to reflect her new position, phone numbers remain the same.

We are re-sending our flyer to remind those of you coming from out of town that it is time to make your hotel reservations and make your travel arrangements. For you locals, just a reminder. We are looking forward to seeing you all again soon!

Any of you who would like to present a briefing this year, please let us know. We want to keep it fresh!

Also, we would like to ask all of you to please get the word out for this event this year. Let's get a good crowd together!

Rock of the Marne!  
Tim and Monika





# 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team

## 71<sup>st</sup> ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATION!



Operation Dragoon to the Battle of the Colmar Pocket - from St. Tropez to Colmar, the US 6<sup>th</sup> Army Group and 7<sup>th</sup> Army in France 15 August 1944 to 9 February 1945  
Hosted by Outpost International, Society of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division, the Army Historical Foundation, and the Embassy of France

When: 17-19 September 2015 (Thursday to Saturday)  
Where: Sheraton Pentagon City Hotel, 900 South Orme Street, Arlington, VA 22204



Who: Please join us in honoring the veterans of the 6<sup>th</sup> Army Group; 1<sup>st</sup> French Army; 7<sup>th</sup> Army; 6<sup>th</sup> Corps; 3<sup>rd</sup>, 36<sup>th</sup>, and 45<sup>th</sup> Infantry Divisions; 1<sup>st</sup> Allied Airborne Task Force – 517<sup>th</sup> PIRCT (including AT CO/442<sup>nd</sup> IN), 509<sup>th</sup> PIB, 4463<sup>rd</sup> PFAB, 550<sup>th</sup> AIB, 551<sup>st</sup> PIB, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> IPB (UK); and 1<sup>st</sup> SSF in Southern France; the supporting US Army Air Corps; US Navy, Coast Guard, and Merchant Marine; the OSS; and from the participant allied nations of France, Poland, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Greece, and Canada; the 21<sup>st</sup> Corps, 28<sup>th</sup> ID, 75<sup>th</sup> ID, and 12<sup>th</sup> AD which joined the 3<sup>rd</sup> ID and 36<sup>th</sup> ID in the Battle of the Colmar Pocket, family members, friends, and anyone interested in WWII history.

What: 17 Sept: 9 AM to 7 PM – Registration, Historical Seminars I, II  
18 Sept: 9 AM to 12 AM – Historical Seminar III  
2 PM to 6PM – Reception, French Embassy, Washington tour  
19 Sept: 8 to 12 AM – ceremony in Amphitheater at Arlington National Cemetery,  
Wreath layings Tomb of the Unknowns, 3ID monument, Audie Murphy graveside 6 to 9 PM – Banquet

Why: To honor the veterans of the Operation Dragoon and the campaigns in Southern France, the Vosges, and in Alsace, to preserve history, educate the public, and pass on the torch of their proud legacy.

Room Reservations: Price - \$95 per night, one day prior to event and one day after. Cutoff date is 24 August to receive the event rate. We have limited rooms available so make your reservations now.  
Reservations: 1-800-325-3535 or call Jennifer Chan at 703 271 6635 email: jennifer.chan@sheratonpentagoncity.com  
Reservation Group Name: Operation Dragoon

Point of Contact: Monika Stoy, President, Outpost International, Society of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division  
timmoni15@yahoo.com, PH: 703 912 4218  
6531 Milva Lane, Springfield, VA. 22150 USA  
Registration: Event registration - \$35. Luncheon - \$25. Banquet - \$45. (Free for WWII veterans of the campaign in France)

## OPEN TO THE PUBLIC



# 517<sup>th</sup> Parachute Regimental Combat Team

## Submitted by

Name: **Mark DeBard**  
From: Columbus, Ohio  
E-mail: [mldebard@gmail.com](mailto:mldebard@gmail.com)

## Comments:

My father, **Richard M. De Bard**, was attached to Company I of the 517th. He recently died March 3, 2015. He is listed in the 1944 Christmas roster.

Added: August 2, 2015

## Administrivia

If you miss any MailCalls, they are all available online at <http://www.517prct.org/mailcall/>

- At any time, if you want to be added or removed from the MailCall list, just let me know, or just click on the unsubscribe link on the email.
- Send any news, stories, or feedback to: [MailCall@517prct.org](mailto:MailCall@517prct.org)
- If you send me email that you do not want included in MailCall, just label it as FYEO.
- I now understand how Ben could get confused about what he already posted and what he didn't. If I miss something, please just send it again.
- Donations for any programs involving the 517th should be sent to our new Association Treasurer: Identify the purpose of any donation (Annual Donations, In Memory of... etc.) and make all checks payable to:

**517 PRCT Association, Inc.**  
c/o Miriam Boyle Kelly  
19 Oriole Court  
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866



PARACHUTE REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM

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